



Associated Press

At a Mass yesterday in St. Peter's Square, Pope John Paul II prayed that Lithuania would attain independence through negotiations with the Soviet Union. Lithuanians carried placards at the Mass in Vatican City.

John Paul Says a Prayer For Lithuania's Success

By CLYDE HABERMAN

Special to The New York Times

ROME, April 15 — Celebrating the revival of democracy across the globe, Pope John Paul II offered an Easter prayer today that Lithuanian hopes for independence would be realized through discussions with Moscow.

"We hope their aspirations are confirmed through a respectful and comprehensive dialogue," the Pope said in Lithuanian, one of 55 languages that he used to send holiday greetings to the world.

John Paul's brief remarks were his second comment this weekend on Lithuania, the annexation of which by the Soviet Union in 1940 has never been recognized by the Vatican. On Saturday, in a message to religious leaders in the predominantly Roman Catholic Baltic republic, he said his prayers included "all your noble people, to whose aspirations I am closer than ever."

On each occasion, the Pope stopped well short of flatly endorsing Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union, apparently reflecting the Vatican's caution about interfering too heavily in a delicate situation.

Testing Ties With Moscow

The Holy See is still testing its new relations with Moscow, which were officially restored only a month ago after a rupture of more than seven decades. Nevertheless, given its influence in Lithuania, the church could potentially play a significant political role. The Vatican has said it is prepared to mediate in the dispute if asked.

Also on Saturday, the Pope met with Vadim V. Zagladin, the foreign affairs adviser to President Mikhail S. Gorbachev, but details of their conversation were not disclosed.

On a drizzly Easter Sunday in St. Peter's Square, tens of thousands of the Catholic faithful and the merely curious gathered as John Paul celebrated an open-air Mass.

This year, the Pope's Easter message, "Urbi et Orbi," or "To the City and the World," was broadcast to millions of television viewers in more than 50 countries, including the Soviet Union. Only the Soviet republic of Latvia carried the speech live, Vatican officials said.

In his speech, John Paul spoke glowingly of "the reawakening of many democracies," which he said "is leading to dialogue and trust between peoples."

Appeal to Wealthy Countries

"After the years of dictatorships which have deprived men and women of their basic freedoms, the true dimensions of the spirit have been discovered anew," he said.

The Pope's most vivid language was reserved for a plea that in recent months has become one of his recurring themes: a call on the world's wealthy countries not to forget third world problems despite their preoccupation with democratic developments in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. He recalled visits that he has made to the drought-stricken region south of the



Associated Press

Pope John Paul II said yesterday that with the recent resurgence of democracies, "the true dimensions of the spirit have been discovered anew."

Sahara in Africa, and added:

"I have seen the sand burying villages, drying up wells, burning the eyes, turning children into skeletons paralyzing the strength of the young as it brings desperation, starvation, sickness and death."

"Man of today, wealthy nations of the civilization of opulence, do not be indifferent to this great tragedy," he said. "Be ever more urgently resolved to help those peoples who struggle each day for survival. Let yourselves be convinced that there can be no freedom where misery continues to exist."



Associated Press

President Vytautas Landsbergis of Lithuania at a Mass in Vilnius yesterday. Lithuanians leaders said they would not discuss Soviet demands that they renounce their independence until after the holidays.